

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Published by Ralph F. Cummings, Box 75, Fisherville, Mass., U. S. A.

Price \$2.00 per year

New Ad Rates — 6c per word, \$1.00 per inch, quarter page \$2.25, half page \$3.00 and Full Page \$5.00. — 4 times for the price of three.

Vol. 19

May 1951

No. 224



There are few novel collectors who get their names in the papers who do not receive inquiries about the chances of getting a peep at an old-time Police Gazette. Even the mammoth four-page National Police Gazette of the 1840's still has a lure about it for most folk. Been going on a long time. Steamed up about the pink sheet of the last quarter of the century, fans overlook Frank Leslie's Day's Doings, illustrating current events of romance, police reports, important trials, and sporting news. Started in June, 1868, its picture department had the advantage of Leslie's art and engraving studio, perhaps the best in the country at that time. Leslie was a great periodical starter, but he let many of his papers die off from lack of red corpuscles. Here for your inspection is the front of the premier number of the now scarce weekly, showing Joe Coburn and Mike M'Coole shaking hands before their fight of May 5, 1868.

CHEAP, BUT NOT TRASHY

By Fred T. Singleton

In the early decades of our century the late W. E. Woodward was a highly titled and compensated copy writer and newspaper promotion executive, but about 1927 he began writing books about American history published in standard cloth cases for the book trade. In 1945 we bought a copy of his *The Way Our People Lived* (1944) because from the title and press notices it seemed to be our special kind of a book about the nineteenth century. After six years the book is as good as new, showing no signs of use, still in the original wrapper ventilating the highfalutin claim that it is good enough to "take its place as one of the most valuable American history source books now available." Don't you believe it.

In his autobiographical chapter on a cotton-mill village in the 1880's the author pinned a "shabby" young mill hand (\$7.50 a week—plainly some sort of an insect to Woodward) named Ben Marshall to a piece of South Carolina pine and exposed what he seemed to really believe was the "dream-world" in which Ben lived, for the diversion of casual readers and sorry direction for well-intentioned investigators trying to find out what farm and home folks of the 1880's were curious about. Ben Marshall made what to Woodward was the sloppy slip of subscribing to "cheap and trashy" mail-order periodicals, writing to all the advertisers therein offering to send anything free, to newspaper celebrities in all walks of life, and receiving the biggest mail of any citizen in the South Carolina village of Graniteville. For several years, starting at thirteen, the author was assistant to his uncle, postmaster at that point.

We, too, were working at thirteen, out on the world and not for an uncle. But we believe we knew more then about the minds and hearts of human insects than Woodward did at seventy. Besides being on week-days a printer's apprentice, on Sundays a Missouri River explorer and snake killer, and a boy oologist, ornithologist, entomologist, Agassiz Association fan, and stamp collector when we got the chance, we shared a bed seven nights a week with a golden-hearted slap-bang waiter dying of tuberculosis in his early twenties, khew more than was necessary about Kansas City's red-light district inside and out from Fifth Street to the river, sat more than once too far down in front at the old Fountain Theater of ghastly greenish-blue memory, called some of the lookouts in the second-floor State-Line gambling-rooms (or hells, if you like that better) by their first names, and always vomited like clock-work after our third whiskey.

Like Woodward, we were born in the middle 1870's, but seems like we have kept intact nearly all of our original boyhood likes and dislikes, long time reveled in Victorian sentimentalism, rejected a lot of piffling high-hat factors down through the decades, and tried to keep from laughing at the tricks in the psychoanalyst's false-bottomed box. Our heart overflows with sympathy and understanding for Ben Marshalls past and present, and our mind is still set on showing up as mean-spirited Woodward's contemptuous reference to the easy-to-subscribe-to periodicals published for salt-of-the-earth Americans in the pre-automobile era.

By extension Woodward tossed outside the pale of his civilization the far more than just a mere million other high-hearted enthusiasts besides Ben Marshall in often lonely farmhouses and more likely to be cozy town cottages who subscribed to these popular papers, read the crystal-clear stories in them like *At the World's Mercy* and *A First Love's Faith* with interest and enjoyment and without complications, and answered the advertisements, sending off stamps and money orders but more often loose silver for needle caskets, Gipsy Madge's Fortune Tellers, telescopes, patent pants buttons, rub'er-type linen markers, real-type printing presses and outfits, razors, false mustaches,

watches, custom-made pants, boxes of silk ribbon remnants, patent buttonhole workers, solid rolled-gold rings, packages of elegant lace, gold-mounted revolvers, concert organettes, Samantha at Saratogas, gilt-edge visiting cards, magic lanterns, and a thousand and one other novelties, gimcracks, and bits of merchandise you too would have wanted in the 1880's if you hadn't been born on Smug Street.

We have first-hand knowledge of the round-the-stove papers of the 1880-1890 period, and possess two or three substantially bound volumes of them in nice condition as souvenirs of an era when church steeples reached heavenward. At six, maybe near seven (we could read in the Bible at five), as a frequent week-end visitor and nephew showered with love, we had the privilege of getting up on a chair in a closet in the home of our father's two maiden sisters and bachelor uncle and taking down neatly arranged stocks of the fascinating (to us then and yet) Fireside Visitors, Golden Moments, Happy Hours, and similar "cricket on the hearth" papers four or five years before young Woodward handed them out to Ben Marshall through the Graniteville post-office window. And many a stamp or dime, even a quarter, we enclosed in painfully written letters for parlor tricks, boy fire-eater outfits, bird calls, scrap pictures, foreign postage stamps, rubber-type printing outfits, three-cent books, agent's outfits, captivating ten-cent contrivances, and silk-fringed calling cards imprinted with our name concealed under pretty colored cut-outs.

No, those mail-order periodicals delivered to Ben Marshall might have been cheap but they were not trashy. We have re-examined our 1885-1889 volumes of Vickery's Fireside Visitor, at that time one of the most widely circulated of the family circle papers with lots of mail-order advertising published in the then spotlighted Maine city of Augusta, and fail to find a single word of dirt for dirt's sake. Naturally written stories still bring the same old thrills and smiles, and tears, and the advertisements still stir the coins in our pocket after more than sixty years.

NEWSY NEWS

by Ralph F. Cummings

Fred T. Singleton is now writing articles for the Roundup every month. Remember when he brought out "Peeps in our Literary Past" every month? So now you have a chance to read all those fine articles in our little magazine, and he'll send in a front page layout, like in this issue, every now and then. It will make the Roundup even more interesting to read. Thanks to Fred for giving us all these fine articles. We have others also to thank for fine articles, such as J. Edward Leithead, who had a fine article on "Tanbark and Spangles in the Five Cent Libraries," in last issue, which was a dandy. Ed LeBlanc and his fine articles on various rare dime novels, Nameless Joe for his comical articles, and many other articles by various members, for I try to run articles of various kinds to please all.

We have a little sad news to mention, for both Charles Duprez and G. Fred Orphall reported that brother S. K. (Doc) Hunt, 205 Haldon Ave., Patterson, N. J., died Thursday, April 5th, 1951, of a heart ailment and diabetes. We sure are going to miss him very much, for Doc, Charlie and Fred were planning a visit up here to Fisherville some time in May, so these things do happen to us all in time, although it's lucky we don't know when that day will come. Charlie and Doc were up here Nov. 5th, 1949, but Fred has never been here, so he does know all the nice things to be seen up this way.

If this isn't a bargain, I don't know what it is—John Reischmann is offering 730 Work and Wins for only \$300.00. Just think of it, why that's less than 50¢ each. Can you beat that price. Any one that's looking for a nice collection of all the original numbers, this is their chance. I'd buy them myself, but can't afford it now, as it's costing me plenty, in fixing

up my place, with asphalt shingling, siding, etc., on all four buildings—barn, hen house, garage and book house, so you see what I've let myself in for. Two of us are doing the work ourselves, so that helps some. We are greenhorns, as we never did it before, but a carpenter has been coaching us, so we're doing pretty good, I think. Clyde Wakefield was down yesterday, and he said it looked fine. That's something. Two of the buildings were leaking every time it rained, and spoiled a lot of books, so I had to do something quick.

Our new member, Ross R. Deveau of South Pasadena, Calif. is a juvenile book collector, such as Alger, Castleman, etc. Welcome to our brotherhood Pard. (See his address in membership list.)

Another new member, T. N. Hill of Dallas, Texas, had a fine article in the Daily Times Herald, Sun. Feb. 18 1951 on "Lowly Dime Novel Finds Success in Attic." Has a fine picture of Tyrus and his wife looking over old timers on a table, and a line of them hung up in back of them of Detectives, Wide A Wake, Old Sleuth, Jesse James, Nick Carter and what not.

Have you seen a copy of "Desperate Men," by James D. Horan yet. It is a complete and unabridged account of Jesse James and his outlaw band. It's in the Avon 25¢ pocket size books.

Fred Lee says that there were many numbers of the War Library reprinted, and some of the second printings the titles were changed (as a fellow says, tricks in all trades). No. 2 was reprinted in No. 74, No. 5 in No. 96. No. 6 in Nos. 88 and 240. No. 34 in Nos. 169 and 309. No. 204 has a slight change in title.

Some of the fellows are wondering why the Roundup is so slow in reaching them, while others don't get it at all. All Roundups are put into the mails at the same time, but being sent under the 3rd class mailing, is a strictly money-losing service of the post office, and is the slowest way of delivering mail, and is the last "work-ed" at a post office. First and second class mail is carried first, and if

there is more time, as much of the third class is worked to fill the normal working day. If your route carrier has a large amount of third class mail he may be consistently behind with it—2 or 3 weeks is nothing unusual in some post offices and at some times—normally, the larger the city, the worse the condition. This is simply caused by the fact that the P. O. is not able to hire extra help because it doesn't make a profit, and congress doesn't want to appropriate more taxes, which you and all of us pay. The alternative, which is expected most any time, is the expected doubling of postage rates on this type mail. If the Roundup isn't delivered when it should be, we urge you to have a talk with your postmaster, as the trouble may be right there—as well as letting me know. If I could afford to have the Roundup sent second class, I would, but I can't, and many wonder how I keep the paper going, some times I wonder myself. Many times I run in the red, as you can see for yourself. I love the Roundup the same as you fellows do, and I want to keep it going as long as I can, just think, it's been going since Jan. 1931 and Ralph Smith's Happy Hours Mag. from 1924 to Dec. 1930. It isn't a secret that the Roundup or any other small hobby paper of any kind, isn't a money maker, and extra postage costs might have a very crippling effect on them, but as to the Roundup of which is a hobby and business combined, I have to do some scratching at times to keep it a going. Yes, I do run a full page ad whenever I have room for it, or smaller, and some times things sell good, and again not at all.

Just think fellows, small papers, such as stamp magazines and other kinds have been requested to "discontinue" in Czechoslovakia and Poland, so we're all thankful to have a small paper such as the Roundup on this side, for all to enjoy. We only live once Pards, so let's try to enjoy ourselves while we are here. England and Australia doesn't get the Roundup for 2 months or more.

Wanted for Murder! The Dalton

Boys came out in the Avon Comic's last month. Whoever made it up must have been drunk for I think I could of done better than that. They should of read up on their history of the Daltons before they wrote about them.

Wm. H. Bradshaw says: Perhaps you may not know, but most and maybe all of the later stories in the New Magnet Library from about 850 on, are copies of stories which appeared in the Union Jack Library published over in England. These New Magnets carry a U. S. copyright date approximately four years later than when originally issued in the "Union Jack." I have compared many of both libraries and the reading and plot are practically identical, with only the characters and scenes changed. Bro. Bradshaw sent in an addition to J. Edward Leithead's article in the May 1950 issue, as follows: Original numbers 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 16, 73, 191, 415, 417, 485, 516. Reprint numbers of above, 925, 931, 942, 950, 964, 968, 976, 1053, 1166, 1163, 1028, 1054. No. 413 shown as reprint 1163, should be instead reprint 1170. William says in his younger days he was a very avid follower of Nick Carter. Later when S & S ceased printing Nick Carters he turned to Sexton Blake where his interest now lies. Just to show what he meant by some New Magnet stories being taken from Union Jack stories (he imagines this was outright plagiarism by the New Magnet author and not done with the knowledge or consent of either S & S or the Amalgamated Press.) Bill says he has checked back over 50 copies of each, this way with the same story in both, but unfortunately my Union Jacks are incomplete for comparison, and haven't had the time to read all the New Magnets to check up. This is only on issues shown on Bro. Leithead's list marked "New, not reprinted" and probably is true from #700 on. He mentions 850 in first part of this letter. My collection starts at #850 and copies he has previous to this are not in runs large enough to enable him to check against. As you probably know, Magnet and New Magnet Libraries were

all taken from other Weeklies with perhaps only the exception of the Harrison Keith stories, which he believes were original (although he is not too certain of this). Also originally some 3 or 4 Nick Carters were combined to make up one Magnet Library. Later the 5¢ Nick Carters were so written that three of them made a series, but each complete in itself and these in turn made one "Magnet Library."

Bowery Boy #77, Bowery Billy for the Defense, or the Firebug of Findley, was written by J. C. Cowdrick under the pen name of John R. Conway. John H. Whitson also wrote many of the Bowery Billy stories too.

Watch all newspapers and magazines, old and new, for articles on old dime and nickel Novels and story papers.

Frank James never had a book written on his life (alone). Jesse James was always the main hero. It was always The James Boys or Jesse James on cover of novels and paper covered books, never Frank James. He was as much of a leader as Jesse James. Frank James was the planner and the brains of the gang and the last one to "come in." He survived the whole gang, they just could not catch Frank James. He lived to a ripe old age and was a good citizen. He was my choice of the James Boys—he was well thought of in Old Missouri. I've been down there and saw both Frank and Jesse James' sons and talked with them and many old timers in Missouri, Frank James' son is Robert Franklin James, he lives on the Old James farm, near Kearney, Mo., he goes by the name of Bob James, named after his grandfather Rev. Robert James. Jesse James son lived in Kansas City, Mo. when I met him he was a lawyer, he now lives in Los Angeles, California. His name is Jesse Edwards James named after and in honor of Major John N. Edwards a Confederate officer in the Civil War, a life-long friend of the James Boys and the man who accompanied Frank James when he surrendered in broad day

light to the Governor of Missouri, and the man who after a long fight got the Younger Brother out of the Stillwater pen in Minnesota.

—Buckskin Bill

A LIBRARIAN WHO UNEARTHED HISTORY

by Nicholas Zook

(Courtesy, the Evening Gazette,
Worcester, Mass., 10-18-50)

Today's librarians are a versatile lot. In addition to keeping books, they operate children's story hours, loan sound films and record albums, sponsor lectures and art shows.

They're cultural and social pillars in most towns and cities. Frequently, they're unofficial town historians.

Take Miss Florence E. Wheeler, Leominster librarian for half a century until her retirement last year at the age of 70.

Miss Wheeler was responsible for unearthing much local lore and legend. Through persevering detective work and study of ancient documents she threw light on two of Leominsters native sons—Johnny Appleseed and Buckskin Sam.

The birthplace of Johnny Appleseed legendary patron saint of apple orchards, had for many years been in doubt. A dozen cities and towns from Maine to Ohio claimed him as a son.

Armed with an obscure reference to Leominster in tales of Appleseed, Miss Wheeler combed church and birth records. She proved beyond a doubt that Appleseed, born John Chapman, was a native of Leominster. Her findings have since been accepted nationally.

Buckskin Sam was a vague, shadowy figure before Miss Wheeler began to collect data. It was known he authored more than 50 Beadle novels on the old West, that he had been a Texas ranger, Indian scout and Civil War hero.

When Miss Wheeler completed her research, Sam Hall emerged as a fantastic, but three-dimensional figure. The native of Leominster was a two-fisted, swashbuckling pioneer,

quick on the draw, who was spurned by the town during his occasional visits home. Trouble was, he treated Leominster as he might a frontier town.

Miss Wheeler's findings breathed life into Buckskin Sam as a man who galloped into Leominster on a white horse, to lead the Fourth of July parade, as a mustached character who spurned Eastern clothes for a Western scout outfit of fringed buckskin, and as a strutting figure who demonstrated his scouting skill on the Common by lassoing running boys.

No simple task of keeping books is that of a librarian. Her work encompasses a dozen other pursuits that relate directly to her own and its residents.

ENGINE! ENGINE!

A story of Fire Protection, by Kenneth H. Dunshee, 1939. If you would like to see every kind of Fire Engine ever made, and all in colors, surely you will want this booklet. Has all kinds of fire badges and what not, that has anything to do with fires, firemen, engines, etc., in the old days of firefighting. Some beautiful engines in here, I'll say. \$5.00 takes it, rare.

Ralph F. Cummings, Fisherville, Mass

FOR SALE

One set of Work & Wins from #1 to 732, except two high numbers missing. Price \$300.00. Would like to buy or trade for Young Klondike Nos. 38 and 39.

John Reischmann

Rt. 1, Box 364, Chicago 31, Ill.

NOVELS WANTED

Send List, description and price.

George Flaum

206 Prospect St., Newark, N. Y.

PARTIAL MEMBERSHIP LIST OF H. H. BRO. MEMBERS FOR 1951

14. John R. Reischmann, R. R. 1, Box 364, Norwood Park Sta., Chicago 31, Ill.
22. John P. Ball, 4816 Cortland St., Chicago 39, Ill.
36. Patrick Mulhall, Co. Kilkenny, Castlecomer, Ireland.
74. Edward Gantner, Box 53, Boonville, Mo.
82. G. D. Nichols, 376 Curtis St., Nogales, Ariz.
87. Peter W. Seiter, 5909 So. Sacramto Ave., Chicago, 29, Ill.
94. Bill (Wm.) Erbe, 406 W. 35th St., New York City 1, N. Y.
107. Henry Lofgren, 2306 Florence St., Blue Island, Ill.
110. George A. Urban, 1002 Chicago Ave., So. Milwaukee, Wisc.
116. Clyde F. Wakefield, 11 Lagrange St., Worcester 3, Mass. (new address)
117. Albert Pohlman, Route 1, Hortonville, Wisc.
118. Sam Tananbaum, 135 Magnolia St., Hartford, Conn.
119. H. W. Alsford, 945 Rockdale Drive, San Francisco 16, Calif.
134. Frank E. Henry, 9 Kendall St., Worcester, Mass.
135. F. A. Beverly, Lauderdale, Miss.
143. Dan Bundza, 87 New Bond St., Worcester 6, Mass.
144. Alfred A. Hupfeld, 5965 So. Suba Court, St. Louis, Mo.
145. Tony M. Peterson, 1310 Wilson Ave., Youngstown, Ohio.
147. Everett L. Cline, 930 U. S. Nat. Bank Bldg., Denver 2, Colo.
149. L. Harding, 261 St. John St., Portland 4, Maine.
159. Herman Brauner, 4318 Pennsgrove St., Phila., Pa.
163. Harold C. Farmer, 117 E. Elm St., Lansing 10, Mich.
164. Albert Tannenbaum, 434 Charles St., Bridgeport 6, Conn.
165. W. B. Poage, 505 So. Newport Ave., Tampa 6, Fla.
168. C. T. Shelly, 713 W. North St., Muncie, Ind.
169. John H. Foster, Route 2, Box 122, Dade City, Fla.
171. Roy E. Morris, 221 6th St., S. W., Mason City, Iowa.
175. B. D. Mallory, Culbertson, Nebr.
180. F. Algar, 75 York Road, Ilford, Essex, England.
188. Benjamine Tighe, Box 777, Worcester, Mass.
189. Ernest G. Freeman, 127 Fairfield St., Worcester 2, Mass.
195. James F. Stroecker, 2709½ Blair Ave. (Rear), St. Louis 6, Mo.
197. John E. Kime, 1409 12th St., Altoona, Pa.

New Members

206. Pete Martin, c/o Sat. Eve. Post, Curtis Pub. Co., Phila., Pa. (Henty collec.)
207. Max Saltzman, 5736 Harkins Ave., Los Angeles 34, Calif.
208. Brian Honeysett, 65 Orchard Rd., St. Annes-on-Sea, Lancashire, England.
209. Tyrus N. Hill, 4407 Holland Ave., Dallas, Texas.
210. Frank Merriwell Enterprises, 7324 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood, Calif.

New Addresses

171. Roy E. Morris, 801 E. Michigan Ave., Orlando, Fla.
138. Roy E. Swanstrom, Route 1, New Brighton 12, Minn.

"SIDE NOTES"

Aeronautical Dime Novels, Balloons, Rockets, Planes, etc., wanted by Colonel Richard Gimbel, Hqs. Tenth Air Force, Selfridge AF Base, Michigan.

An occasional paper about old books, old printing types, penny dreadfuls, Toy Theatres.

J. A. Birkbeck

51 Marchmont Rd., Edinburgh 9
Scotland

FOR SALE

Deadwood Dick Library in blue, black & white, no covers. Good, pub. by M. J. Ivers & Co. #3 4 6 15 16 17 18 19 25 27 28 34 36 42 46 47 56 58 50 10c each or all for \$1.70

RALPH F. CUMMINGS

FISHERVILLE, MASS.

FOR SALE

Brigham's Destroying Angel, Being the Life Confession, and Startling Disclosures of the Notorious Bill Hickman, the Danite Chief of Utah. Written by himself. 1904. Paper Bd., 221 pages, illustrated. Pub. at Salt Lake City, Utah. Good condition, scarce. Price \$3.25.

Rhymes from New England. By George D. Rhodes. 64 pages, over 100 rhymes, size 6x9 inches, fine condition. Some of the rhymes are New England Stone Walls, Cape Cod, Zinc Pennies, Up Attic, The Abandoned Farm, and many more fine ones. Price 50¢.

This Way to the Big Show. The Life of Dexter Fellows. By Dexter W. Fellows and Andrew A. Freeman. 1936. Illustrated, 352 pages, nice condition, cloth bound, price \$5.00 and well worth it too.

1000 unused picture post cards, nice condition, for \$9.00.

A good assortment of 200 story papers, such as Fireside Companion, Family Story Paper, True Flag, American Union, Flag of Our Union, New York Mercury, New York Weekly, New York Ledger, a few Youth's Companion, Happy Days, Home Circle, Waverley, for \$18.00 or 15 cents each (many of these are worth 25¢ to 50¢ each.)

Dick Turpin—Back to the Highway. Price 35¢.

From the Earth to the Moon, and a journey around it, by Jules Verne. Well illustrated. 1893. Bd in red cloth. Pub. by Chas. Scribner's Sons, N. Y. Good condition. Price \$1.50.

Pirate Story Series #1 to 5 inclusive, nice condition, 25 cents each, or all 5 for \$1.00.

British Circus Life, 1948. Cloth bd. Full of colored pictures of life in the circus, wagons, animals, tents and what not, nice condition. Price \$3.00 and well worth it too.

The Northfield Bank Raid of James Boys Younger Gang on Sept. 7, 1876. 50¢.

Big Top Rhythms, by Irving K. Pond, 1937. Circus Life. Price \$2.00.

In and Around London by Motor Car in 1913. Price 25¢.

Harry Hazels Yankee Blade, June 29th 1867. Nice 50¢.

Cute Little booklets, very old, The Tickets 1843, The Happy Mite 1846, Catherine Warden 1842, The History of Elizabeth Vermeule 1839, Things to Love 1847. Price 15¢ each.

An old diary or journal No. 5. Written by hand, in Ink, by Edw. Hyde True, of Lynn, Mass., 1861 but covers 1861 to 1864, very interesting. Price \$1 bd.

4 old Bills, with woodcut of natives gathering rubber. Price 10¢ each or all 50¢

Youths Companion—Thanksgiving No. 1892 and 1896. Easter 1898, 25¢ each, Good Stories Premium.

Jesse James Rides Again 1948. Price \$1.00

Bound to Win Library No. 9, From Switch to Lever by Victor St. Clair, gd 1.00

Beadles Dime Novels No. 38 The Wrong Men neatly bd, no yellow cov nice 1.00

Beadles Dime Speaker No. 20, Pub. by Beadle and Adams ----- .50

Everything sent postpaid.

Ralph F. Cummings

Fisherville, Mass.